

Montana Department of Environmental Quality Call for Fiscal Year 2009 Mini-Grant Applications

Background:

Using federal Clean Water Act Section 319 funding, the Montana Department of Environmental Quality is seeking to fund local education and outreach efforts that address water quality issues. Under the FY 2009 mini-grant program, \$20,000 is available for education projects that are focused on water quality and nonpoint source pollution. Mini-grants for **EXACTLY \$1,500** will be awarded. Applicants must provide a minimum 40% non-federal local, in-kind or cash match. Please see below for example of match equation.

Objective:

The mini-grant program will assist local groups working on either nonpoint source pollution or water quality resources issues, by providing funding to address water quality and nonpoint source pollution. Focusing on education and outreach, the grants provide a mechanism to increase awareness of local nonpoint source pollution issues and to improve water quality through educational activities. The priority of the mini-grants is not to sustain current activities, but rather to promote new activities and relationships.

Schedule:

Applications will be accepted during two rounds in Fiscal Year 2009 (July 1, 2008 - June 30, 2009), with approximately \$10,000 available during each round. The first round will begin on June 1, 2008 with a request of applications. Applications must be received by July 1, 2008, with successful applicants being notified by end of July, 2008. The second round will begin on January 1, 2009 with another call for applications. Applications must be received by February 2, 2009, with successful applicants for the second round being notified by end of February 2009. **Money must be spent within one year of project funding.**

Grant Announcement	Application Deadline	Award Notification	Funding Available	Available Money Amount
June 1, 2008	July 1, 2008	July 31, 2007	Upon contract signature	~\$11,500
January 1, 2009	February 2, 2009	February 27, 2009	Upon contract signature	~\$10,000

Mini-grant Criteria and Evaluation Process:

Successful projects will focus on **ONE** activity addressing either nonpoint source pollution or water resource needs. The project **MUST** address larger watershed efforts in their region. The project applicant can be a local watershed group (if a legal entity), conservation district, county extension service, county, school, etc. and must have the ability to manage federal funding. To be clear and concise, DEQ will prioritize applications based on the following tier process, with Tier 1 given the highest prioritization:

Tier 1

- New projects, rather than repeated projects
- New entities to the mini-grant program
- Projects that promote collaborations between entities
- New equipment for on the ground studies
- Used as part of leveraging for other funds (Must show that project would not move forward without mini-grant funding)
- Salary to staff to produce specific results
- One time instruction
- Mileage
- Innovative additions to websites
- One time brochure, newsletter, etc.

Tier 2

- Food for promotion to an event
- Printing materials or costs

DEQ will **not** consider applications that request funding for:

- Ongoing activities (monthly newsletter, etc.)
- Equipment repair
- Staff benefits
- Administrative costs
- Normal website updates

DEQ encourages applicants that display an interest in continuing and/or expanding a program in their local area, once the mini-grant project has been completed. It is DEQ's hope that mini-grant funds be used as start-up money by applicants and that applicants will then actively seek additional opportunities to remain being a presence in a watershed or region. Applicants must provide a minimum 40% local non-federal in-kind or cash match. The match required is calculated as follows:

Grant request/60% = Total grant cost

Total grant cost – Grant request = Match requirement

Example:

Requested Mini-grant Funds of \$1,500 / 60% = \$2,500.

Subtract the Mini-grant Funds of \$1,500 from the \$2,500 and that leaves a **match requirement of \$1,000.**

Each application will be reviewed and approved for funding by a panel from the Montana Watershed Coordination Council's Outreach & Education Work Group that includes individuals from a range of organizations.

Budgets on page 2 of the mini-grant application should use the following format: Tasks to complete the activity should be in rows, while particular costs to complete the tasks should be in columns. For example:

	Instructor	Travel	Equipment	Food
Task 1: Develop curriculum	\$500			
Task 2: Get Materials			\$500	
Task 3: Distribute/Exhibit		\$500		

Each mini-grant recipient will be required to submit a final report 45 days after one year of funding being available to successful applicant, which summarizes the activities and outcomes supported by the grant. For example, if the project is a monitoring project, what are the findings? If it is a workshop or training, what is the agenda and how many people will participate? What are some issues/concerns from participant feedback? If the project is preparation of a video or brochure, include that final product. Please use standardized final report format found on DEQ website. Final reports should contain images that display participation and excitement through local efforts. Additionally, all successful applicants must develop a press release to be included in local newspapers. Support can be provided by DEQ when writing press releases. Successful applicants should complete the project, submit the final report, budget, invoice and copy of press release/news article. After receiving these materials, **grantees will be reimbursed for \$1,500 by DEQ.**

For more information on the Mini-Grants or for assistance please contact:

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